

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-01 PM-03
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P R 061640Z MAY 77
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4534
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 1233

E O 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PGOV WB US UK UR FR
SUBJ: RUDOLF HESS: IMPROVEMENT IN HIS CONDITIONS IMPRISONMENT

L I M D I S

REFS: A) USBERLIN 1081; B) USBERLIN 978; C) STATE 76344 (EXDIS/
NOTAL); D) USBERLIN 944; E) USBERLIN 872

1. SUMMARY: AT LATEST MEETING OF SPANDAU GOVERNORS
IMPROVEMENTS IN HESS' CONDITIONS OF IMPRISONMENT WERE
DISCUSSED. SEVERAL IMPROVEMENTS WERE AGREED. END SUMMARY.

2. AT SPANDAU GOVERNORS' MEETING HELD THURSDAY 5 MAY,
FOLLOWING SUBJECTS RELATIVE TO IMPROVEMENTS IN HESS'
CONDITIONS OF IMPRISONMENT WERE DISCUSSED:
(A) PROVISION OF A TELEVISION; (B) REDUCING
SURVEILLANCE ON HESS; (C) INCREASED VISITS WITH INCREASED
DURATION; (D) MORE FLEXIBILITY IN HESS' OUTDOOR REGIMEN.

3. TELEVISION: GOVERNORS AGREED THAT HESS SHOULD BE
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PERMITTED A TELEVISION (WHICH SPANDAU AUTHORITIES WILL
PROCURE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE). IT WAS ALSO AGREED
(AT SUGGESTION OF SOVIET GOVERNOR BOBOVNIKOV) THAT
HESS SHOULD HAVE A SEPARATE TV ROOM, RATHER THAN HAVE
TO VIEW TV IN HIS CELL WHICH IS SOMEWHAT CRAMPED WITH
PERSONAL ARTICLES. TWO CELLS OPPOSITE HESS' CELL WILL
BE CONVERTED (BY KNOCKING DOWN DIVIDING WALL) INTO TV

ROOM. HOWEVER, HESS' USE OF TV WILL NOT REPEAT NOT BE POSTPONED UNTIL TV ROOM IS READY. HE WILL IN THE INTERMIN, BE PERMITTED TO VIEW TV IN ANOTHER CELL. HESS WILL NOT RPT NOT HAVE UNLIMITED USE OF TV. GOVERNORS DID NOT FULLY WORK OUT DETAILS OF USE, BUT DECIDED THAT HOURS OF OPERATION OF TV WILL BE MATTER WITHIN DISCRETION OF CHIEF WARDEN.

4. SURVEILLANCE. HESS HAS BEEN UNDER STRICT SURVEILLANCE (A GUARD WITHIN HIS CELL) SINCE HIS SUICIDE ATTEMPT. BASED ON DOCTORS' RECOMMENDATION (REFTEL A), GOVERNORS AGREED TO REDUCE SURVEILLANCE TO A GUARD POSTED OUTSIDE HESS' CELL.

5. VISITS. GOVERNORS AGREED THAT HENCEFORTH HESS MAY HAVE TWO (2) VISITS PER MONTH (PREVIOUSLY ONLY ONE (1) VISIT PER MONTH WAS PERMITTED.) SUGGESTION THAT DURATION OF VISITS BE EXTENDED FROM THIRTY (30) MINUTES TO ONE (1) HOUR WAS REJECTED ON BOBOVNIKOV'S OBJECTION.

5. OUTDOOR REGIMEN. DEPENDING ON HESS' HEALTH AND THE WEATHER, HESS IS PRESENTLY PERMITTED APPROXIMATELY FOUR (4) HOURS PER DAY TO STROLL, SIT, ETC, IN THE GARDEN LOCATED WITHIN THE PRISON. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT MORE FLEXIBILITY BE SHOWN IN PERMITTING HESS TO BE OUTSIDE. BOBOVNIKOV BELIEVED THAT TREMENDOUS FLEXIBILITY WAS ALREADY IN EFFECT. ON FURTHER DISCUSSION, THE WESTERN GOVERNORS AGREED WITH BOBOVNIKOV; CONFIDENTIAL

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ESPECIALLY AFTER HIS CONCURRENCE IN THE AMERICAN GOVERNOR'S SUGGESTION THAT HESS BE PERMITTED, AS APPROPRIATE, STROLLS DURING EVENING HOURS - EVEN IF THIS RESULTED IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITY GREATER THAN FOUR (4) HOURS PER DAY.

6. GOVERNORS AGREED TO REVIEW THESE CHANGES AND TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF IMPROVEMENTS ON A CONTINUING BASIS.

7. COMMENT: THE SOMEWHAT DETAILED ACCOUNT IS BEING REPORTED IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THE REMARKABLE COOPERATION WHICH BOBOVNIKOV HAS SHOWN ON MATTERS HANDLED AS ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS. (WE SHOULD CAUTION THAT BOBOVNIKOV MAY RETRACT HIS CONCURRENCE IF HIS POLITICAL SUPERIORS SO ORDER.) THIS REPORT ALSO IS INTENDED TO ILLUSTRATE THAT THE OFFICIAL RULES OF SPANDAU, WHILE THEY CAN BE AND ARE INVOKED FROM TIME TO TIME, DO NOT TRULY

DESCRIBE THE CONDITIONS OF HESS' IMPRISONMENT.
WERE THE RULES TO BE APPLIED STRICTLY, HESS'
CONDITIONS OF IMPRISONMENT WOULD BE VERY SPARTAN
INDEED. INSTEAD, AGREEMENTS REACHED FORMALLY
OR INFORMALLY BY THE GOVERNORS DETERMINE THE
MATTER. END COMMENT.

8. THE BRITISH GOVERNOR, AS CHAIRMAN GOVERNOR
(MAY IS BRITISH MONTH AT SPANDAU), CHAIRED AND
OPENED THE MEETING. HE GAVE INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
ALONG FOLLOWING LINES: "BEFORE WE BEGIN, I WILL
PREFACE MY VIEWS BY STATING THAT BMG INTENDS TO
CONTINUE PURSUING THE RELEASE OF HESS." USBER
IS CONVEYING ITS CONCERN TO UKBER THAT SUCH COMMENTS
SHOULD NOT BE MADE IN GOVERNORS' FORUM WHICH HAS
NO ROLE IN THE MATTER; THAT THE GOVERNORS ARE
HANDLING IMPROVEMENTS AS A PURELY ADMINISTRATIVE
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MATTER; AND THAT TO RAISE THE HIGHLY POLITICAL
QUESTION OF HESS' RELEASE IN THE GOVERNOR'S FORUM
CAN ADVERSELY EFFECT THE LIKELIHOOD OF AGREEING
TO IMPROVEMENTS.

9. WE WILL ALSO SEEK TO COORDINATE A PRESS LINE WITH
ALLIES. ON A IF ASKED BASIS WE WOULD PROPOSE SIMPLY
TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS HAD IN
FACT BEEN MADE IN HESS' CONDITIONS OF IMPRISONMENT.
IF ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIETS HAD AGREED, WE WOULD
REPLY THAT "CHANGES IN THE PRISON ROUTINE REQUIRE
UNANIMITY AMONG THE GOVERNORS". IF ASKED
WHY THE CHANGES WERE MADE NOW, WE WOULD REFUSE TO
SPECULATE BUT WE WOULD NOTE THAT IN THE PAST
IMPROVEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE FROM TIME TO TIME.
OTHERWISE, WE WOULD REFUSE TO COMMENT. (WE ARE
TRYING OUT ABOVE APPROACH ON FRENCH AND BRITISH.)GEORGE

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Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, POW, PRISONERS WELFARE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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